GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2237
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2016
Committee on languages
Chaudhury Shri Jitendra

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the designated committee meant for scrutinising the proposal for inclusion of more languages in Eighth Schedule to the Constitution including Kok- Borok (Tripuri) language has been reconstituted and made functional; and

(b) if so, the details and present statuts thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIREN RIJIJU)

(a & b): A Committee (Pahwa Committee) was set up in 1996, under the Chairmanship of Shri Ashok Pahwa, Secretary (OL), MHA for evolving criteria for inclusion of languages in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution. As a follow up measure, a Committee of Linguistic Experts (Shri Sitakant Mohapatra) was constituted in 2003 to evolve a set of objective criteria with reference to which all proposals/representations

â€¦2/

for inclusion of more languages in the Eighth Schedule could be examined and finally disposed off. The Committee submitted its report in 2004. An Inter Ministerial Committee was constituted in 2012, chaired by the then Joint Secretary (HR), Ministry of Home Affairs to make in-depth study of the whole gamut of the issue. Concerned Ministries/Departments viz Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Culture, Office of Registrar General of India etc. were consulted. There was widespread divergence of opinion on the criteria suggested by Sitakant Mohapatra Committee Report.

In order to take a conclusive decision with respect to each of the criteria proposed by Sitakant Mohapatra Committee (SKM), a Committee was formed in Ministry of Home Affairs, with representatives from the Department of Personnel & Training, Department of Official Languages, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of HRD, Ministry of Law and Justice, Sahitya Akademy, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore and the Registrar General of India. Various meetings had been held in this regard. However, no objective criteria could be finalized.

â€¦3/

The problem is that as the evolution of dialects and languages is dynamic, influenced by socio-eco-political developments, it is difficult to fix any criterion for languages, whether to distinguish them from dialects, or for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Thus, both attempts, through the Pahwa (1996) and Sitakant Mohapatra (2003) Committees to evolve such fixed criteria have not borne fruit.

The Government is conscious of the sentiments and requirements for inclusion of other languages in the Eighth Schedule, and will examine the requests keeping in mind these sentiments, and other considerations such as evolution of dialects into language, widespread use of a language etc.

*****